

Dana FYI

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Correspondence

cc: Lynn

State of Utah
Office of the Governor



Pamela Blackham Bailey

Executive Assistant
Public Lands Policy Coordination Office

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John -
Kathleen Clarke
requested that
we send a copy
of this constituent
response to you.
Pam

Paul - do we have an application
for this project, or is it still just
w/ the BLM?



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

GREG BELL
Lieutenant Governor

Office of the Governor

PUBLIC LANDS POLICY COORDINATION OFFICE

KATHLEEN CLARKE
Director

June 28, 2013

RECEIVED

JUL 10 2013

DIV. OF OIL, GAS & MINING

Gar Elison, President, Utah Crossroads Chapter
Oregon California Trail Association
555 South 2130 West
Provo, Utah 84601

Dear Mr. Elison,

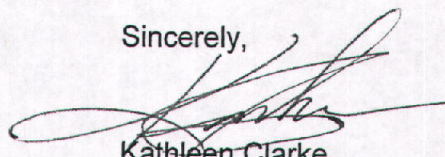
Your letter of June 7, 2013 to Governor Gary Herbert has been referred to me for response. I extend my deepest admiration for your love and concern for the historic trails in the State of Utah. These trails are historic treasures that remind us of the rugged stoicism displayed by early American emigrants. The vigilance of concerned citizens aids in the protection of Utah's cultural and scenic resources. Thank you for your sincere concern for the welfare of Utah's precious resources.

Here at the Public Lands Policy Coordination Office we seek to craft policies that will further the Governor's four focus areas of education, energy, jobs and self-determination. Our staff considers the many effects of land development, including the possible degradation or loss of cultural resources. The issue that you have raised concerning the proposed strip mining of Utah's Salt Desert is an important issue to consider in this proposed mining project. We appreciate the suggestion that you have offered in considering an alternative site for Mesa Exploration Corp.'s proposed potash mining.

The Utah Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining may be able to provide the assistance you are seeking. They have engineers and specialists on staff who can consider the viability of your suggestion as well as the impact of the proposed potash mine. They have a working relationship with the BLM and will be able to help you comment on this proposed mining project. You may contact them at (801)538-5340.

Thank you for your letter. I wish you all the best in your conservation effort.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Clarke
Director

7 June 2013

Governor Gary Herbert
350 North State Street, Suite 220
PO Box 142220
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2220

Consultant Services
Office of the Governor
Date

JUN 11 2013

Dear Governor Herbert,

I write to ask voice concern about an issue now under consideration for the use of public land in the State of Utah and to provide input from the Utah Chapter of the Oregon California Trails Association. Mesa Exploration Corp., an international mining company headquartered in British Columbia, wants to strip mine a portion of Utah's Salt Desert and has asked BLM to consider its request. Mesa's proposed Bounty Potash Project is located 120 miles west of Salt Lake City and 15 miles north of Wendover.

The concern is that this area is part of the National Historic Trails where the Hastings Emigrant Trail to California is preserved. This part of the trail is a pristine area because of the evidence of the Trail route. The area is a living museum showing conditions faced by emigrants in crossing the Salt Flats as it is an undisturbed area just as it existed when the Donner Party crossed the Salt Flats in 1846. The natural beauty also let's visitors experience the solitude, loneliness and desperate conditions emigrants experienced on the Salt Flat Trail, now designated as the Hastings Route to California.

The Utah Crossroads Chapter of the Oregon California Trail Association (OCTA) believes there are sufficient locations for mining and developing natural resources laid down by Lake Bonneville that it is in the public interest to preserve this portion of the trail and not destroy this national resource.

We believe there is more than sufficient resource in the old area along I-80 which lies abandoned by MagCorp as it defaulted on its commitment to the State of Utah. That area has permanently destroyed a large portion of the trail and the ruts of the emigrant wagons. Therefore that location ought to be used to gain the use of the natural resources which exist there. This would preserve the most scenic and pristine part of the Hastings route from Floating Island to Pilot Springs.

To illustrate the historical significance of this site I point out that three national OCTA conventions hosted in Salt Lake City by the Utah Crossroads Chapter in conjunction with the National Offices of the Oregon California Trails Association have visited Donner Springs to appreciate its rugged beauty and understand the tremendous challenge the Utah Salt Flats posed to the emigrants to California. More than 500 people went there in 1994 to participate in dedicating a kiosk at Pilot Springs and to view the tracks left by hundreds of wagon on the trail's last ten miles on the Salt Desert.

This site is both a State tourist attraction and a national historic treasure and it would be a shame to compromise the integrity of this site for a resource abundantly available a few miles away.


I ask that you encourage MESA Corporation officials and BLM Official to consider other sites which will prevent the loss of this valuable resource, but allow development of the natural resources. We appreciate the broad responsibility given to The Bureau of Land Management and the task of dealing with competing issue of public interest. On the one hand the agency is responsible for determining the best use of public land and the associated resources. But an equally important responsibility is preserving the National Historic Trails with the associated vistas. This responsibility acknowledges historic locations and natural scenes and vistas which make these sites worth preserving. Those of us who have worked with the bureau's dedicated public servants know they have a very tough job in managing and making hard choices about our nation's public lands, America's public domain. It is important the public, along with state and national leaders act to help balance these public needs and resources.

I am certain that as Governor, you are concerned about both of these issues and seek options which balance these needs. We offer our suggestion as we believe the option we suggest will preserve a historic site with pristine beauty and significant historic value and allow development of Utah's natural resources.

We believe it is not in the overall public long term interest to destroy the Hasting Trail Route across the Salt Flats by approving the MESA Corporation request to mine potash at this specific location. We believe this is a one of kind site of national significance and heritage worth preserving. We ask that you recommend BLM staff deny the request to develop a mining operation which will destroy this site and portion of the Historic Trails System. As I stated above there is sufficient capacity at the abandoned MagCorp site for MESA to have a viable project and for Utah to benefit from the development of natural resources. Our suggested option also preserves the Historic site along the Hastings Route to California which is part of the National Historic Trails System.

The officers of the Utah Crossroads would be happy to meet with you to provide greater details. We have sent this suggestion to the BLM, State Historic Preservation Office, The National Park Service which administers the Historic Trail System, the local elected representatives whose districts cover this area, Senator Knudson and the Tooele & Box Elder County Commissioners.

Sincerely,


Gar Edison, President, Utah Crossroads Chapter

Oregon California Trail Association.

555 S. 2130 W.

Provo, Utah 84601

801-850-8014